

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 and 13-19 would be pending upon entry of this Amendment. Claim 1 would be amended by incorporating the features of claim 12, which would be canceled. It can be noted here that this Amendment should be entered in accordance with MPEP 714.12 at least because entry would not introduce any new feature and would place the claims in condition for allowance, obviating the rejections under Section 102(e).

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) for anticipation by U.S. Patent No. 6,768,058 to Pallapothu ("Pallapothu"). With regard to claim 12, the final Action states that Pallapothu discloses "the connection point of the first sealing member (34) is positioned at a larger radius than a connection point of the second sealing member (36, see figure 2)".

Pending claims 1 and 12 and Pallapothu were discussed during a telephone conversation between the Examiner Estrada and the undersigned attorney on October 1, 2008. The undersigned thanks the Examiner for his courtesy during the interview.

In particular, the locations of the connection points, sealing members, and wall portions, which can be seen in Applicant's FIGs. 5 and 6, for example, were discussed. The undersigned believes that agreement was reached that Pallapothu does not disclose a connection point of a first sealing member positioned at a larger radius than a connection point of the second sealing member, and that at most, Pallapothu discloses connection points at the same radius.

As discussed with the Examiner, a "connection point" is just the point at which a "sealing member" meets its "wall portion". This is clear from the claims (claim 1 recites, for example, "a first wall portion extends from a connection point of the first sealing member") and from the description, for example, at page 11, line 33 - page 12, line 29. In Applicant's FIG. 5, for example, it can be seen that the sealing member 220 joins a vertical wall at a connection point, with the vertical wall facing the sealing member, and similarly for the sealing member 230. The two connection points can be seen to be at different radial (horizontal) distances from the vertical centerline of the covering as depicted in FIG. 5. For the purposes of this discussion, a substantially similar arrangement can be seen in Applicant's FIG. 6. Applicant's connection points with different radii make for easy installation of the claimed device.

With a proper understanding of Applicant's "connection points", it is easy to see how all of the features of claim 1, as it would be amended, are not disclosed in Pallapothu. The final Action reads Applicant's sealing members on Pallapothu's front and rear flanges 34, 36 that can be seen in Pallapothu's FIG. 2. As described at col. 3, ll. 16-20, each of "the flanges 34 and 36 projects from the outer sealing surface 28", which contacts the surface 30 of a wall panel aperture in which Pallapothu's grommet is installed. As shown in FIG. 2, vertically oriented portions of the sealing surface 28, which is to say, portions of the sealing surface that face the flanges 34, 36, join the flanges at respective points that are the same radial (horizontal) distance from the vertical centerline of Pallapothu's grommet.

At least because Pallapothu does not disclose a device having the connection point of a first sealing member positioned at a larger radius than a connection point of a second sealing member as claimed, Pallapothu cannot be said to anticipate any of the pending claims, as they would be amended by entry of this Amendment.

It is believed that this application will be in condition for allowance upon entry of this Amendment, and an early Notice of same is solicited. If the Examiner has any questions, the undersigned attorney may be telephoned at the number given below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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